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ABSTRACT

This document identifies violence as a major problem in North Carolina public schools, with thousands of students and staff victimized every year. In 1994, 6,937 criminal incidents were reported to the State Board of Education; 6,897 students were involved in incidents on school property as offenders and 1,447 students were victimized. Additionally, 815 staff members were reported as victims. The governor has implemented programs involving schools and communities to help curb the problem. The state legislature has passed stricter laws and regulations to protect children and teachers from school violence. At the direction of the governor of North Carolina, a prevention center designed for task forces to study and develop ways to prevent crime in schools has been opened. A public awareness campaign is in place to convince students of the hurt that violence causes. One solution identified as important was the use of an 800 number to seek information on how to curb violence in communities and schools. (JAG)

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SCHOOL VIOLENCE.
LET'S GET IT OUT OF OUR SYSTEM.

North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence

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SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS NOT A BIG CITY PROBLEM OR A NORTHEAST OR WEST COAST PROBLEM

SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS A PROBLEM IN NORTH CAROLINA

IN 1994:

- 6,937 criminal incidents were reported to the State Board of Education.
- 6,897 students were involved in incidents on school property as offenders and 1,447 students were victimized.
- 815 staff members were reported as victims.
- 6,886 students were suspended or expelled for involvement in criminal acts.
- 2,081 individuals (students, staff and outsiders) were arrested in connection with the occurrence of criminal acts on school property

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SCHOOL VIOLENCE EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

- Eight out of ten deaths among teenagers and young adults are violent. Therefore, members of that age group are the number one victims of premature death in the United States. (The United States Centers for Disease Control, 1986)

- Almost 8 percent of urban middle school and senior high school students miss at least one day of school a month. They are absent because they are afraid to go to school. (The National School Safety Center, 1989)

- In the past 30 years, violent crime in rural areas has increased by 200 percent. It is now growing at a faster rate than in cities. (Senate Judiciary Committee Report, 1992)

- Armed victims are twice as likely to be killed as unarmed victims. (The FBI Uniform Crime Report, 1992)

- One-fourth of all student suspensions nationally were for violent incidents committed by elementary school students. (National School Boards Association Report, 1993)

- Four out of five students surveyed have experienced some form of sexual harassment in school. And while the impact in school is significant for all students, girls suffer greater effects than boys. (AAUW Survey on Sexual Harassment in America's Schools, 1993)

- Each month about 8 percent of all high school students are involved in fights that result in an injury requiring medical attention. (The United States Centers for Disease Control, 1992)

- There were 23 thousand people who died as a result of a homicide in 1990. More than half of the victims knew the person who killed them. (The National Research Council Study of Violence, 1993)

- Homicides and assaults in the United States are much higher than those in other industrialized nation. Among 16 industrialized countries surveyed in 1988, the United States had the highest rate for serious sexual assaults. The U.S. also had the highest rate for all other assaults including threats of physical harm. (The National Research Council Study of Violence, 1993)

- The rate at which teenagers aged 15 to 19 were killed by firearms leaped 77 percent between 1985 and 1990, reaching its highest level in history. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1990)

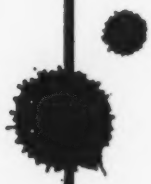
- Students bring about 135 thousand guns into schools every day. (National School Boards Association Report, 1993)

- Nearly 20 percent of high school students carry a weapon, and 5 percent carry a firearm, at least once a month. (The United States Centers for Disease Control, 1991)

- About 10 percent of all youth aged 10 to 19 say that they have fired a gun at someone or have been shot at. (National School Boards Association Report, 1993)

GOVERNOR HUNT HAS MADE THE SOLUTION TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE A STATE PRIORITY:

> "Communities must rally around their schools and work together to keep our students and our teachers safe .."



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GOVERNOR HUNT CREATED A TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE TO SOLICIT SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLUTIONS

BASED ON THE TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS, THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY TOOK ACTION

NORTH CAROLINA HAS NEW, STRICTER LAWS AND REGULATIONS DESIGNED TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND TEACHERS FROM SCHOOL VIOLENCE

THE NEW LAWS HAVE:

- Made it a felony to bring a firearm onto school property
- Made it a misdemeanor to possess any weapon on school property
- Required school principals to report specific acts of violence to local law enforcement agencies
- Made funds available for safe schools programs in schools and school systems
- Encouraged schools to implement parent involvement and conflict resolution programs

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Summary of Recommendations

Toughen Weapon Laws

- Establish weapon-free school zones.
- Limit access by minors to handguns.

Deal With Violent Students

- Expel violent students.
- Transfer students to alternative schools or programs.
- Provide high quality alternative programs.
- Require schools to report violent offenders to law officials.
- Require court counselors to confer with school officials.
- Expand immediate school actions.
- Take privileges away from students.

Focus Resources on Schools

- Fund the Basic Education Program.
- Teach violence prevention.
- Set up local task forces.

Strengthen the System

- Improve the Juvenile Code.
- Create the North Carolina Center for Prevention of School Violence.

GOVERNOR HUNT ALSO CREATED THE NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE IN LATE 1993.

THE CENTER IS PART OF THE GOVERNOR'S CRIME COMMISSION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CRIME CONTROL AND PUBLIC SAFETY

THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE CENTER IS TO PROMOTE SOLUTIONS TO SCHOOL VIOLENCE VIA STUDENT FOCUSED PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

TO DATE THE CENTER HAS:

- Held violence prevention workshops for school systems across the state
- Met with numerous civic and law enforcement groups to develop the support infrastructure
- Initiated the creation of a Public Awareness/ Solutions Program which will include PSAs, In-School Communications, Mediation Groups, N.C.S.A.V.E., Student Incentives

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THE PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE:

Convince students that school violence is hurting everyone and that they can have a positive impact on finding solutions to the problem.

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The Public Awareness Campaign

Creative Strategy

The issues facing us:

- 7% of the students create 90% of school disruptions
- Most students are apathetic
- Most students do not believe school violence is out of hand
- It is acceptable to carry a weapon for self defense or to be cool
- Most students would not tell on anyone bringing a weapon to school
- Violence is an acceptable means to settle an argument
- Bringing weapons to school is a means to feel powerful, important, get attention

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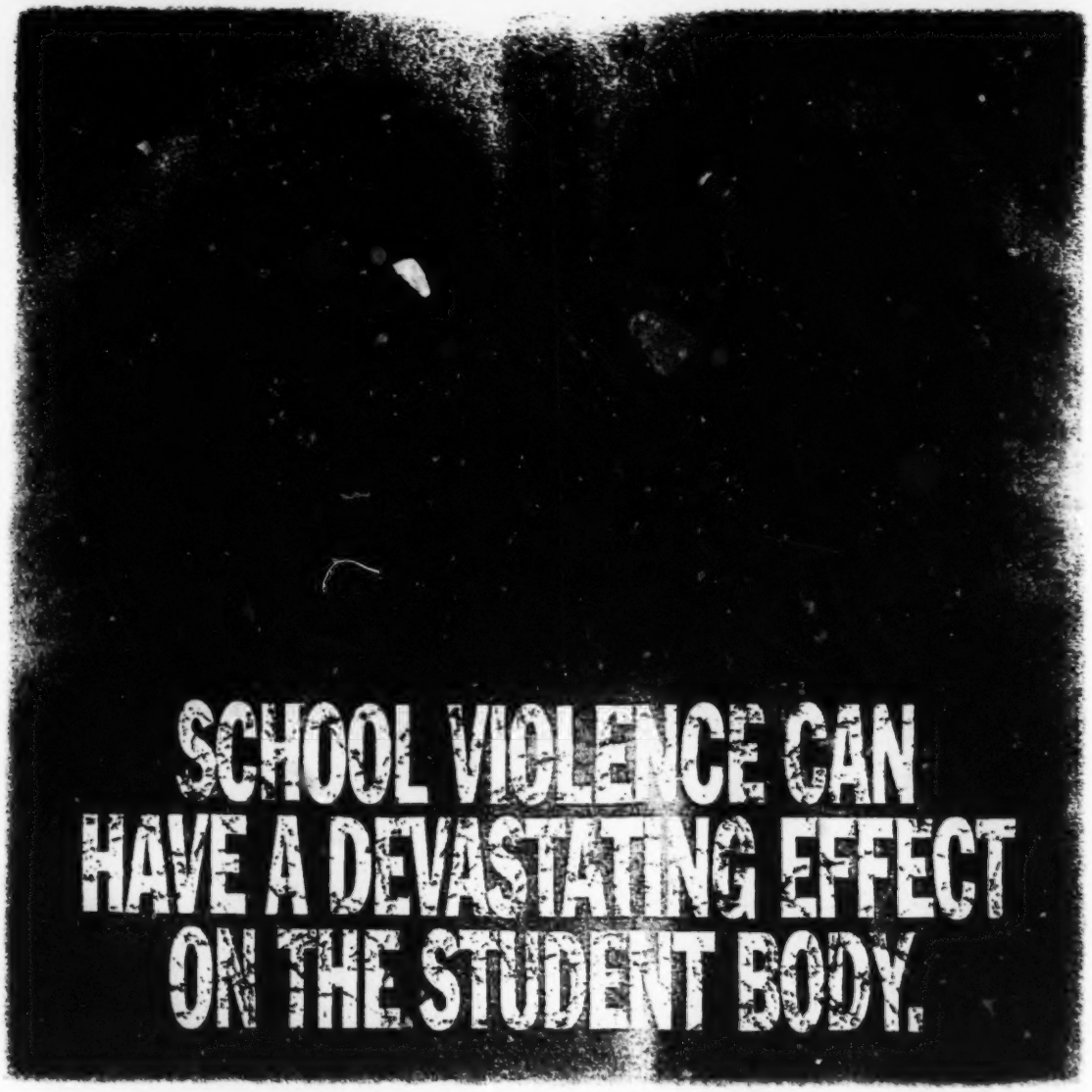
SCHOOL VIOLENCE

TIME MAGAZINE
DECEMBER 12, 1994 & MARCH 6, 1995

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED FEBRUARY 20, 1995

1-800-299-6054



In one school year alone, more than 22,000 students in North Carolina felt the powerful effects of violence in their schools. Even more kids have lost the secure feeling of having a safe place to learn. They know the chances are good that they, too, will come in contact with some kind of school violence. Before long, no one will be untouched by this problem. That's why we must pull together to activate effective programs aimed at making North Carolina schools safer. These same programs are already working in some schools. Let's make them work in many more. Call the toll-free number today and find out how you can help fight this growing problem of school violence. If we work together, we can give our children an education free of violence.

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The Public Awareness Campaign

In School Solutions Program

The campaign will feature a 1-800 number for students to call for information on how they can help prevent school violence

The Center has established itself as a clearing house for information regarding:

- N.C.S.A.V.E.
- Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation
- School Resource Officers
- Scholastic Crime Stoppers
- Student Incentive Awards
- Teen Court
- Law-Related Education
- Peer Helper Concept

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NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT THE SCHOOL VIOLENCE PROBLEM - AS A PARENT, AS AN EMPLOYER, OR AS A CITIZEN OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA - IT AFFECTS ALL OF US.

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THE NORTH CAROLINA CENTER FOR THE PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS HERE TO HELP RAISE THE AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM, CHANGE STUDENT ATTITUDES, AND PROVIDE A CATALYST FOR FINDING SOLUTIONS.

THE FIRST STEPS TO END SCHOOL VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY GOVERNOR HUNT:

- New Laws
- Creating the Center to focus on solutions to the problem
- State funding for after school programs
- Pledge to continue being proactive

WE ARE NOW ASKING FOR YOUR HELP TO BRING THE MESSAGE AND THE ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO EVERY STUDENT IN THE STATE.

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